



State Health Commissioner Judith A. Monroe, M.D addressed about 25 people who attended the Region 10 Obesity Summit. The meeting was held at Gibson General Hospital in Princeton, Indiana on Monday, November 13. Dr. Monroe began the meeting with information about the declining health of Indiana citizens; she was also interested in learning about concerns and programs fighting obesity at the local level.

In her presentation, Dr. Monroe noted that Indiana has seen a steady increase in obesity and diabetes over the past 20 years. In her presentation Dr. Monroe showed that Hoosiers are not always the worst or the best in most health related areas such as obesity, smoking, level of exercise or eating nutritionally, but usually fell somewhere near the bottom in the nation.

Participants at the Summit spent the morning discussing ways to create programs, or expand current programs, to fight obesity. Several participants at the summit noted that often the problem was not a lack of programs, but getting people to take advantage of those programs.

The group talked about simple ways to get residents motivated to be more active, eat better, quit smoking and choose other activities that are known to improve health. Participants commented that programs are successful when they bring healthy solutions to the person. That means finding creative ways to bring more activity and health foods into schools and workplaces.

In addition to hearing from Dr. Monroe, summit attendees heard details about several local programs that have been successful.

Sandy Hatton, director of marketing at Good Samaritan Hospital, talked about how she helped to create community, and employee wellness programs in Knox County.

Sherry Hurt and Louise Kiesler, with the Vanderburgh County Health Department, shared tips and the tools they give to the public as part of health department's diabetes prevention program.

Janet Graves, with Gibson General Hospital also told the group how she was able to get grant money to make the Lifestyles Diabetes Center a reality.